

REMARKS

Claims 2, 4, 6, 9 and 12 are rejected as being indefinite based on a narrow range that falls within broad range limitations within the same claim. The narrower limitation has been removed to fall back to the broader range through the enclosed amendment. This does not narrow the scope of these claims.

Claims 1, 2, 11 12 were rejected as being obvious over Broadrick, U.S. Patent No. 3,152,563. Broadrick shows a tufting machine having a rather sophisticated hook configuration with a portion of the hook interpreted to be a dividing plate.

Claims 1-4 and 11-13 were rejected as being obvious over Franks, U.S. Patent No. 4,029,029 which has a hook which is deemed to have an integral divider plate as well.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 6 and 9 were indicated as being allowable if rewritten to overcome the 35 USC § 112 rejection.

The applicant appreciates the Examiner indicating claims 6 and 9 are allowable if provided in proper format. The applicant has amended claims 6 and 9 to put them in the proper format without otherwise adding any prosecution history to those two claims.

Additionally, on the Office Action summary page, claims 5, 7, 8, 10, 14 and 15 were indicated as being objected to with no additional comments. The applicant believes that the use of divider plates extending from structure other than the hooks is what gave rise to this objection rather than rejection. Accordingly, claim 1 has been amended to require the divider plate extend from one of reed fingers and a support block which distinguishes the structures of the cited references, namely, Franks et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,029,029 and Broadrick, U.S. Patent No. 3,152,563 which have hooks with structure which was apparently equated to divider plates.

Claim 1 also the limitations as it relates to the loop engaging surface being 50 mm relative to the backing material removed since this limitation appears to have been disregarded in the obviousness rejection rationale of the other claims. This amendment broadens claim 1 as it relates to that aspect.

Claim 4 was amended to depend from claim 6.

Claims 5, 7, 8, and 10-13 were cancelled.

Claims 14 and 15 were amended to depend from claim 6 and 9 which were indicated to be allowable.

Claims 2 and 3 remain dependent from claim 1 but are believed to be allowable based on the amendment regarding the location of the divider plate as it relates to claim 1 as amended which is not in conjunction with hooks as provided by the cited references.

As affected by the enclosed Amendment, claims 1-4, 6, 9, and 14-15 are believed to be allowable and such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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